

Application No.: 10/052,356

Docket N .: 22197-00009-US

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-16 are pending in the application.

Objection to the Specification

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to the recitation of element 43 on page 5 of the specification. The Examiner stated that element 43 cannot be an "outer region", "manual gripping regions" and a "tulip-shape area". Applicant respectfully disagrees. As shown in Fig. 1, reference numeral 43 defines an outer region of the coupling. This outer region also serves as manual gripping regions. Furthermore, the outer region indicated by reference numeral 43 has a tulip shape, as is clearly illustrated in Fig. 1. Therefore, the recitation of reference numeral 43 on page 5 of the specification is accurate.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §102

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 3-5, 7-10 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Chambers et al. (USP 5,406,983). The rejection states that claims 1-99 are rejected, although only claims 1 and 3-16 are pending. Since the rejection only substantively addresses claims 1, 3-5, 7-10 and 13, Applicant assumes that only these claims stand rejected under §102(b).

In order for anticipation to exist, a reference must teach each and every element of a claimed invention. "The identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the... claim". *Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co.*, 868 F.2d 1226, 1236, 9 USPQ2d 1913, 1920 (Fed. Cir. 1989). Independent claim 1 recites a coupling for a pipe, wherein the coupling includes "[a] housing having a bore therein", "a retainer for retaining said pipe within said housing" and "a layer of a relatively deformable material moulded onto at least a part of both an inner and outer surface of said housing, wherein said layer on said inner surface is adapted to form a seal with an outside of said pipe". Independent claim 13 recites a method of forming a coupling comprising "injecting a first material of a relatively hard plastics material to form a housing of said coupling with an integral retainer" and "subsequently injecting a second, softer

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material to form a layer on said harder material both on an inside and outside of said housing, wherein said layer on said inside of said housing is adapted to form a seal with an outside of a pipe". The claimed combination of features is advantageous in that it provides an effective seal, improved grip for a user of the coupling and easy manufacture of the coupling.

Chambers et al. discloses a tubular connection member for joining tubes that have externally threaded ends. Chambers et al. does not teach or suggest a retainer for retaining the pipe or a layer of deformable material that extends over both the inner and outer surface of the body. For these reasons, Chambers et al. does not anticipate claims 1 and 13, nor does Chambers et al. anticipate dependent claims 3-5 and 7-10.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1 and 3-16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Petty et al. (USP 4,923,227) in view of Chambers et al.

In order for a claimed invention to be obvious, all of the claim recitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art. *In re Royka*, 490 F.2d 981, 180 USPQ 580 (CCPA 974). Claims 1 and 13 recite the features discussed above. Similarly, claim 11 recites a coupling for connecting one end of a corrugated pipe to a cooperating member, wherein the coupling includes "a rigid housing of tubular shape having two spring catches on opposite sides adapted to engage between corrugations on an outside of said pipe inserted within the coupling" and "a continuous layer of a deformable material bonded with both an inside and outside of said housing to form an internal, tapering sealing surface adapted to seal with an outside of said pipe". Claim 12 recites an assembly comprising a corrugated pipe and a coupling, wherein the coupling includes "[a] housing having a bore therein", "retaining means for retaining said pipe with said housing" and "a layer of a relatively deformable material moulded onto at least a part of both an inner and outer surface of said housing, wherein said layer on said inside surface forms a seal with an outside surface of said pipe in said bore".

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Petty et al. discloses a corrugated pipe coupling comprising a body having locking members and a tapering internal surface. Petty et al. suggests that a resilient seal may be provided to seal against the walls of an inserted pipe. However, Petty et al. does not teach or suggest that a deformable layer could extend over both the inner and outer surfaces of the coupling. As stated above, Chambers et al. does not suggest that a deformable layer could extend over both inner and outer surfaces of the coupling. Therefore, the proposed combination of Petty et al. and Chambers et al. would not result in the invention claimed in claims 1 and 3-16.

Furthermore, the coupling of Chambers et al. is designed for coupling tapered, threaded pipes used in oil fields wherein the coupling is designed to be used under relatively extreme temperatures and pressures as well as to reduce corrosion. The Chambers coupling, which has a threaded internal surface, is not suitable for coupling corrugated pipes. Thus, Chambers et al. is directed to a different application and addresses a different problem than Petty et al. and the claimed invention, which are directed to couplings for corrugated pipes. Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art would not look to combine the teachings of Chambers et al. and Petty et al. to arrive at the claimed invention.

Conclusion

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

Applicant believes no fee is due with this response. However, if a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 22-0185, under Order No. 22197-00009-US from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 
Brian J. Hairston

Registration No.: 46,750

CONNOLLY BOVE LODGE & HUTZ LLP

1990 M Street, N.W., Suite 800

Washington, DC 20036-3425

(202) 331-7111

(202) 293-6229 (Fax)

Attorney for Applicant